

HCS SB 827 -- ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

SPONSOR: Sifton

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with Amendments" by the Standing Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 8 to 1. Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Select Committee on Education by a vote of 8 to 0.

LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON DYSLEXIA (Section 633.420, RSMo)

This bill creates the Legislative Task Force on Dyslexia. The Task Force will advise and make recommendations to the Governor, General Assembly, and specified state agencies. The Task Force will consist of 20 members, as described in the bill. Specified members will be appointed by the President Pro Tem of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The task force will make recommendations for a statewide system for identification, intervention, and delivery of supports for students with dyslexia, as described in the bill.

The Task Force will hire or contract for hire specialist services to support the work of the Task Force as necessary with appropriations or from other available funding.

The Task Force will expire on August 31, 2018.

This provision of the bill is similar to provisions contained in SB 548 and HCS HB 921 (2015), and HCS HB 1928 (2016).

DYSLEXIA (Section 161.1005)

This bill makes other changes to the law regarding dyslexia:

(1) Requires, by July 1, 2017, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to employ a dyslexia therapist, licensed psychometrist, licensed speech-language pathologist, certified academic language therapist, or certified training specialist to serve as the department's dyslexia specialist who has a minimum of three years of field experience in screening, identifying, and treating dyslexia and related disorders;

(2) Requires the department to ensure that the dyslexia specialist has completed specified training and received specified certification;

(3) Specifies the qualifications the dyslexia specialist must possess and the responsibilities he or she will have, including assisting the department with developing and administering

specified programs for school districts no later than the 2017-18 school year;

This provision of the bill is similar to provisions contained in HB 1928 (2016).

TRAUMA-INFORMED SCHOOLS INITIATIVE (Sections 161.1050 and 161.1055)

Beginning July 1, 2017, this bill establishes the "Trauma-Informed Schools Initiative." Accordingly, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall provide information regarding the trauma-informed approach to all school districts, and offer training on recognizing and responding to trauma.

This bill also establishes the "Trauma-Informed Schools Pilot Program." Under said program, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall choose five schools across Missouri to receive intensive trauma-informed training regarding how to recognize and respond to the signs of trauma in students, teachers, and staff. The program will be terminated on August 28, 2019, and before December 31, 2019 the department shall submit a report to the General Assembly on the results of the pilot program.

These provisions of the bill are similar to HCS HB 2565 & HCS HB 2564 (2016).

GIFTED EDUCATION (Sections 162.720 and 163.031)

This bill modifies provisions relating to gifted education.

Beginning in the 2017-2018 school year, a school district will incur a reduction in funding if it experiences a decrease in its gifted program enrollment of more than 20%. If a school district experiences a decrease of 20% or more in its gifted program enrollment, an amount equal to the product of the difference between the number of students enrolled in the gifted program in the current school year and the number of students enrolled in the previous school year multiplied by \$680 must be subtracted from the school district's current year payment amount. This provision does not apply to school districts with an average daily attendance of 350 or less.

This provision of the bill is similar to HB 637 (2015) and HCS HB 1419 (2016).

SCHOOL COUNSELORS (Sections 167.265, 168.303, 168.500, 168.520, and 192.915)

This bill changes the term "guidance counselor" to "school counselor" in laws relating to elementary and secondary education.

These provisions of the bill are similar to HB 2428 (2016).

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAMS (Section 167.266)

Beginning with the 2016-17 school year, this bill permits a school board or local education agency of a charter school to establish an academic and career counseling program in cooperation with parents and the local community that is in the best interest of and meets the needs of the students in the community. School districts and local education agencies may use the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program as a resource for the development of a district or LEA program.

The bill requires the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop a process for recognition of a school district's academic and career counseling program established with parents and the local community, no later than January 1, 2017.

This provision of the bill is similar to HB 382 (2015) and HB 1611 (2016).

This bill contains a delayed effective date for Sections 161.1050 and 163.031.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say dyslexia is adversely affecting the educational opportunities of 10% to 20% of Missouri's students.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Sifton; Decoding Dyslexia; and Becky Jacques.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.